

1. Tea Culture

*Please write about the culture of tea in Ireland. I.e. what does tea mean to people in Ireland? Why is tea important to people in Ireland? How is it ingrained in the daily life of people in Ireland? How does tea inspire people in Ireland every day? How is tea loved and celebrated throughout Ireland? What is tea on the streets like in Ireland? Word limit: **150** words.*

In Ireland, tea is more than a culture - it's a lifestyle. After the Irish flag itself, there is no emblem more indicative of what it truly means to be Irish, than a mug of hot tea clasped by Irish hands.

If you ask an Irish person if tea is important in Ireland, they will reply with a firm "Yes, of course!" When you ask them why it is so important, they will most likely give two reasons: they were brought up drinking tea (at home and at granny's house), and it gets so cold and rainy in Ireland, that sometimes the only comfort can be found in a hot beverage.

Tea is celebrated during family visits, friendly catch-ups, and even alone by the fire while reading a good book. A cup of tea with milk and sugar is the ultimate cosy accompaniment, and a source of instant rejuvenation. Nothing puts an instant smile on an Irish person's face as much as that first sip of tea!

2. Tea's Purpose

*Please write about what does tea symbolize in Ireland, i.e. hospitality, friendship, love, sharing, boost of vitality (as a wakeup and pick-me up), timing out. Word limit: **30** words.*

Tea is celebrated and cherished as a form of hospitality, welcome, friendship and relaxation in Ireland. When you enter an Irish household, whether as a new guest or an old friend, the very first thing your host will offer you is a cup of tea.

3. Tea History

*Please write about the history of tea in Ireland. How was tea introduced to Ireland? What was the foundational beginnings of tea drinking in Ireland? How did the tea culture in Ireland develop? This section should be written based on folk stories where possible. Word limit: **100** words.*

Ireland has the second highest per capita consumption of tea in the world, after Turkey. When black tea became truly popular in the 18th century, Ireland embraced the addiction immediately. It first became popular among the wealthy upper class, but soon spread to the lower classes and those living in rural areas, because of its hearty, survival qualities. Low income families could only afford weak tea.

While in England, tea was brewed to the highest perfection, in Ireland a more rustic approach was taken, and the tea leaves were left to steep all day on simple kettle on the stove. Assam tea leaves were preferred over Darjeeling, because of their richer flavor.

When the famine hit in 1840, tea became a substance of survival. Without any potatoes, the Irish population turned to tea to take the edge off the starvation which ensued. World Wars saw huge shortages imposed on tea allowances, which was the most difficult rationing for the Irish! So instead of relying on Britain for tea imports, the Irish turned to India and Kenya to source their tea.

4. In A Word

What is the word for tea in Ireland, i.e. is it tea or is there a specific way of saying 'tea' in Ireland? Is there more than one way of saying 'tea'? Word limit: **10** words for each traditional way of saying the word 'tea'.

In Irish, a cup of tea is called a "cupán tae." However, the general lingo is "a cuppa."

5. In a Phrase

What is the phrase to welcome guests for tea in Ireland whether you are inviting a friend or a stranger. Word limit: **30** words for each phrase provided.

"Can I make you a cuppa tae? Ah gowaaan, a nice hot cuppa."

6. Favourite Brew

Describe the favourite tea of Ireland, ensure you cover the two main parts provided. (1) Start this section by describing the favourite tea leaf type commonly drunk in Ireland, i.e. green tea, black tea and why? (2) What is the favourite tea beverage in Ireland? Include here the number one tea beverage of choice for Irish people. Word limit: **100** words for each tea provided (if there is more than one favourite brew).

1) Black tea is the number one tea of choice for Irish people. Green tea, herbal tea, matcha tea - nope, none of these count as being real teas. Black tea served in a tea bag is the most traditional way of drinking and serving tea in Ireland - it's extremely rare to brew black tea leaves instead of using a tea bag. Convenience is important in Irish tea culture!

2) Competition for the best tea in Ireland is fierce, and the rivalry of Irish tea brands is a legend in itself - one which matches the infamous Irish folklore of Tir na Nog and Cuchulain. One can tell a lot about a person based on their favorite tea brand. If the answer is Twinings, all interest is immediately lost - any English tea influence is inferior to a true Irish tea-drinker's heart. The real competition, however, and where the tea controversy really lies, is between Lyons Original Blend and Barry's Golden Blend.

You won't find any posh loose leaves in a true Irish household - in Ireland, everyone grew up with a plain, simple, old fashioned tea-bag, ready to take the whoosh of steaming hot water from the kettle on those freezing winter (and summer) days. And you can bet that tea bag is either Lyons, or Barry's. Choosing your tea brand preference is a serious life decision if you're an Irish person, because once you choose, there's no going back. It's a very personal topic! Most of the time, there isn't even a choice, as tea brand preference is inherited and passed down through families.

Most Irish people like their tea very strong (strong enough to trot a mouse on!), with plenty of milk - sometimes up to a 1/3 of a cup full! Sugar is optional. No matter what your preference, the first thing your host will ask you after offering you a cup of tea, is "And how would you like that, a bit of milk and sugar?" Unlike herbal teas, which you drink with the tea bag still floating in the cup, you have to take the tea-bag out of the cup before you add the milk and sugar to drink. Otherwise, the tea will just become overly strong and bitter!

7. Interpreting the Lingo

Is there any special lingo used in Ireland for tea. Also, any special lingo that is not easily understood or known by tourist but would be helpful for a tourist to know? Is there a specific way of ordering tea? Are there particular words a tourist should avoid using? Also, is there anything special around tea that a tourist should watch out for? Word limit: 100 words for each tea name defined.

The lingo around tea is pretty simple, and generally revolves around the word "cuppa." Sometimes, a tourist who isn't aware of the brands may get confused by offers such as, "Would you like a cup of Barry's?" or by the Irish accent, which sometimes exaggerates the pronunciation of the word tea to "tae."

When ordering tea in Ireland, it's best to keep it simple. If you ask "Can I have a cup of tea," this only ever means one thing in Ireland, and you will be understood straight away. If you order an Breakfast Tea, or a Darjeeling Tea, you will only confuse the Irish, who only know one kind of tea: the one that comes in a tea bag. There are no variations! You will be provided with a pot of tea filled with several tea bags - the larger the pot, the more tea bags needed!

Milk and sugar is always provided on the side. And don't worry, you don't have to specify the brand of tea you would like either, although many serious Irish tea fans have been known to ask whether a certain cafe serves either Barry's or Lyon's.

8. Other Favourites

List and briefly describe other favourite teas that are also commonly enjoyed throughout Ireland. Are these favourites preferred in certain regions of Ireland over others. Are there differences with how people drink and make tea within different regions of Ireland? Do different regions use different ingredients, i.e. different types of tea leaf, herbs, spices? Word limit: 50 words for each favourite tea/region.

When it comes to Irish tea culture, it's important to understand, that there really are only three types of teas: Barry's, Lyon's, and then a tea type you must have bought by mistake. Simplicity and consistency is key. Once you've chosen your tea brand, you have to stick with it. It's like choosing your favorite football team. Once you've made the connection, the loyalty is there forever. No other teas exist in Irish culture.

Sure, the trend of herbal teas, such as green tea and mint tea, are growing in popularity among health connoisseurs. But you won't find any of that in a real traditional Irish home. Whether you're in Dublin city, or in the countryside (which is basically every else in Ireland apart from Dublin), a cup of tea means a tea bag full of tea leaves, dunked in some boiling water, and served with milk and sugar - and probably a few biscuits, too. The understanding is universal, and the brewing method is the same everywhere. You can buy tea bags just about anywhere, in supermarkets or in newsagents in the middle of nowhere.

9. Where is IT Served

*Describe the culture of drinking tea in Ireland. Where is tea served in Ireland? I.e. talk about how tea is served in the homes, workplaces and on the streets. Provide the local name for the tea places on the streets in Ireland. How do people gather for tea? Is there a traditional name for these gatherings? Word limit: **200** words*

Tea is best served in people's homes. For a true Irish tea-drinking experience, you need to be welcomed into an Irish household and served a tea the traditional way. While there are plenty of fabulous cafes in Dublin city, it's not quite the same experience as drinking tea at home.

Many Irish people believe that tea tastes better in a china cup, so they reserve the china for the special occasions. Otherwise, a plain mug will do the job just fine - nothing fancy. People gather for tea over breakfast, with a snack while visiting a friend or relative, after a long night out dancing. It's the absolute perfect way to end a night of partying for many young people, who love to go to a friend's house and sit at the table with a cup of tea at 3am in the morning, having a great chat about everything that happened.

On another note: no one ever just makes tea for themselves. It is a communal affair! If someone is making themselves a pot of tea, they will always announce it to the room, and ask if anyone else would like to join in on the delight.

10. How Often it is Enjoyed

*What times in the day/occasions is tea in general enjoyed in Ireland? What is the perfect time to have tea? How many cups of tea do people generally drink in Ireland? Are there specific times in the day for tea gatherings? What times of the day is tea most likely to be served to guests. Word limit: **100** words*

A true Irish tea-drinker will gladly drink tea at any time of the day. Some cannot start their day without it - it's even more important than coffee. So a tea with breakfast or after breakfast is an absolute essential.

Many Irish people lose count of the amount of tea they drink in one day. They start with one or two in the morning, and then by late afternoon, there are suddenly piles of empty tea cups scattered around the house - up to 15! And if an Irish student is studying for exams, you can bet that all the tea cups will disappear, only to be found in their room, spread out all over the desk. Tea is both a fuel and a life source.

Guests are most likely to be served tea in the mid morning (often referred to as "elevenses") or late afternoon, generally around snack times. This is the best time to pay a visit to your neighbours. As for visitors, tea can be served at any time, and after every meal, tea is offered as the perfect pairing with a digestive biscuit.

11. Tea Ritual / Ceremony

*Briefly describe the process of brewing tea in Ireland. Do not list this in point format. Describe the process of brewing tea creatively in the sense of the ritual of brewing tea. Is it brewed on the stove or is it just steeped on the benchtop. Are any herbs and spices added? If so, when? Is sugar added to the pot during the brewing process? How strong is the tea made? Word limit: **200** words for each tea type provided.*

Again, when it comes to brewing the tea, the Irish don't waste time on ceremony. Equipment needed is minimal - just a kettle and a mug. Simplicity is key, and makes the tea taste all the more wholesome.

The first step is, of course, to choose your tea brand. Next, you boil the kettle, and get your mug ready, and drop the tea bag into it. If there's a large crowd, tea will be made in a teapot, and sometimes a tea cosy keeps the pot warm. Now, whether you pour your milk in first, before the hot water, is a point of controversy, but in most cases it is best practice to add the milk after pouring and steeping.

Once you've poured the water into your mug and onto the tea bag, you prod the tea bag a bit with a spoon to release all the flavor. Then, you remove the tea bag, and add the milk and sugar to that rich darkness, stir, and enjoy. As mentioned before, no one leaves the tea-bag in the mug while drinking. It's not a herbal tea or infusion!

2. How tea is Served

Describe the ritual of serving tea, ensure you cover the four main parts provided. (1) What type of cup is tea served in? Include how tea is served in the homes as opposed to how it is served on the streets. (2) How is tea served to guests i.e. is tea served straight into cups and then served to guests or into a beautiful teapot first? Is it served on a tray or the just cup? (3) How full is the tea cup/glass filled (describe the gap left in mm)? What does it signify to fill the

cup to that level? (4) Who serves the tea, the man or woman of the home or other? Is it served with sugar/milk on the side? Word limit: 200 words

(a lot of this has already been covered)

3. Served With / Food Pairing

List and briefly describe the most common foods/snacks traditionally served with tea. Please provide the traditional names of the snacks. Are there any food items enjoyed casually with tea? Also, are there any special food items served only to guests? Word limit: 200 words

Tea is served in two ways: either after a meal, or with a snack. A lot of people drink it with their breakfast, too, but the most common time to drink tea in Ireland is with a snack. This could be a digestive biscuit or a rich tea biscuit, because many people love to dunk their snack into the tea.

Tea is also served with chocolate, for example, the famous Irish Cadbury's chocolate, which is also perfect for dunking - however, some people don't think it is good manners to have melted chocolate in the tea, as it might ruin it!

4. Tea Etiquette

How many cups of tea are normally offered to guests/strangers/travelers? What is the politest way a guest can receive tea? Should they accept tea on the first offer made by the host? Is there a particular etiquette accepting the cup, to stirring the tea cup, to holding the teacup? Is a guest able to refuse a cup of tea? If not, why, what does it signify to refuse a cup? If yes, what would be the politest way to refuse tea, what words/gestures should be used? Word limit: 150 words

Irish tea culture and hospitality is known for one thing: insistence. But, in a kind and friendly way! If you are offered a cup of tea in an Irish household, and you politely decline, then your host will ask you over and over again until you agree to accept a cup of tea. The truth is, that a true Irish tea-drinker just cannot believe that anyone would turn down a cup of tea, so most likely thinks you are joking when you say you don't want one!

But don't worry, an Irish person won't get offended either if you continue to refuse - they will just act very surprised, not understanding why you wouldn't want several cups of tea just like them. There is a famous character called Mrs. Doyle in an Irish comedy series, *Father Tedd*, who illustrates this characteristic perfectly - she always asks her guests 100 times do they want a cup of tea, and always makes one for them!

5. TEA vs COFFEE CULTURE

Compare the coffee culture to tea culture in Ireland. Is tea preferred over coffee, or is coffee preferred over tea or are they both enjoyed equally? When would tea be served and when

would coffee be served? What is the street life like? Do you see more tea on the streets than coffee or vice versa? Please compare the coffee culture to tea culture as much as possible. Word limit: 100 words

Tea is most definitely a more traditional Irish drink than coffee. However, coffee is of course gaining popularity in Ireland, but it doesn't have the same cosy, welcoming, and traditional connotations that a cup of milky Barry's or sugary Lyon's tea has amongst the natives. There isn't really a street-side tea culture in Ireland, as the best cups are brewed indoors, and drank in the comforts of your home or a close friend's, to make the ambiance complete.